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ABSTRACT

Three important goals of general education are: (1) to hone critical reading skills so that students will gain the skills of acquiring and processing the information demanded for meaningful participation in a free society; (2) to develop and refine valuing skills in order that students will feel competent about and operate efficiently in decision-making situations; and (3) to increase the number of human themes students may employ in order to understand and share personal experiences with others. This monograph presents a set of classroom activities, called "value sheets," that enable classroom teachers to pursue these goals concurrently. Value sheets are carefully planned and written learning activities containing at least four elements: (1) a narrative presentation of a social situation within which an individual or group must make a decision; (2) an individual reaction guide called a "decision sheet"; (3) a group reaction guide; and (4) discussion starters, questions, and directions for the teacher. In order to participate fully in the learning activities, students must acquire seven critical reading skills (which are identified and defined) that will enable learning on three levels--comprehension, analysis, and personalization. The theme of the learning activities presented here is courage; several value sheets are included. (MM)

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TEACHING CRITICAL READING SKILLS: VALUE SHEETS AS A MEANS TO THIS END

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Volume 10 Summer, 1976 Number 4

TEACHING CRITICAL READING SKILLS: VALUE SHEETS AS A MEANS TO THIS END

by

Robert G. Wright
Associate Professor
of Education
University of Florida

J. Doyle Casteel
Professor
of Education
University of Florida

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INTRODUCTION

Three important goals of general education are (1) to hone critical reading skills so that students will gain the skills of acquiring and processing the information demanded for meaningful participation in a free society; (2) to develop and refine valuing skills in order that students will feel competent about and operate efficiently in decision-making groups; and (3) to increase the number of human themes students may employ in order to understand and share their personal experiences with others.

The purpose of this monograph is to present a set of classroom activities, called value sheets, that will enable classroom teachers to test the proposition that these goals may be pursued concurrently. The theme selected as a focus for the activities is courage.

FOREWORD

If there is anything that captures the attention of educators, it is the word "reading." In this current bulletin by Wright and Casteel, use is made of the valuing approach to getting students involved in doing critical reading.

FERDC is constantly looking for materials which we believe teachers can use in their classroom. I think we have found something in this bulletin.

On behalf of FERDC, we congratulate Drs. Wright and Casteel for providing us with a means to involve students in the critical skill of reading, especially as it applies to helping them make decisions.

Summer, 1976

W. F. Breivogel, Ed. D.
Executive Secretary

SECTION I

Definitions

Value Sheets. Value sheets are carefully planned and written learning activities. Although value sheets may be written in a number of formats, each value sheet may be thought of as containing at least four elements: a narrative presentation of a social situation within which an individual or group has made or must make a decision; an individual reaction guide, sometimes called a decision sheet, that structures and uses student reactions to the situation; a group reaction guide that structures and cues small group interactions; and discussion starters, questions, and directions that the teacher may use in order to allow small groups to share their reactions with one another.

Value sheets may be viewed functionally. In this sense, they are exercises that are planned in order to evoke patterns of language usage that may be associated with decision-making. Decision-making may involve three types of inquiry: The social situation within which a decision is to be made may be comprehended on its own terms; the social situation within which a decision is to be made may be understood within the context of what the student is learning and has learned, and, the social situation may be modified, at least hypothetically, through acts of valuation and decision-making.

Value sheets may also be viewed as instruments. That is, teachers can use these value sheets as an instrument for helping students or as a means of

helping students develop and refine critical reading skills. Examples of the value sheets that teachers may use, with or without modification, are presented below. They are written in five formats according to conventions developed by Casteel.* The labels of the five formats are:

Standard Format
Forced-Choice Format
Affirmative Format
Rank-Order Format
Classification Format

Courage. This word refers to the theme selected as a focus for the classroom activities that are to be presented. Although the meaning of any term may be defined as the sum total of social contexts within which it may be used to communicate, the term courage does possess at least five dimensions. Stated analytically, these five dimensions are:

> If a person (or group) shares his commitments with others, then a condition of courage is present. (Those persons to whom I communicate my cherished ideas, beliefs, dreams, aspirations, and notions may belittle my commitments, me, or both. To communicate, I must run this known risk.)
>
> If a person (or group) stakes his life in order to do what he perceives to be a good

*J. Doyle Casteel and Robert J. Stahl. Value Clarification in the Classroom: A Primer. Goodyear Publishing Company, Inc., 1975.

thing, then an act of courage exists. (Suppose one swimmer goes to the assistance of a second swimmer who is drowning. The swimmer, in effect, stakes his life, i.e., assumes the necessary and known risk in order to do a good thing -- saving the life of another person.)

If a person (or group) openly violates the moral principles of his group in order to obtain an alteration or reconstruction of those moral principles, then a condition of courage exists. (One may violate norms, e.g., mixed marriage; one may violate laws, e.g., segregated lunch rooms, busses. One may violate the procedures, e.g., election of class officers or school cheerleaders. If one commits acts of violation of these types on the basis of internalized and consistent personal standards, he runs known risks, such as ostracism, imprisonment, and loss of social rewards.)

If a person (or group) enters the unknown, willingly, in order to add to human understanding or capability, a condition of courage exists. (Columbus sailed beyond his maps into the unknown. The first cosmonaut journeyed where man had not previously journeyed. Shakespeare journeyed beyond known art forms and in the process influenced the development of the English language.)

These dimensions of courage do contain common elements --

> An individual or group risks well being; the individual or group accepts this risk. The individual or group believes the act of courage will improve the conditions within which persons act out their fate.

Hence, one might say a condition of courage exists if and only if an entity (person or group) chooses to accept risks in order to improve the human condition.

Critical reading skills. Anything that a person reads may be understood on at least three levels. For example, a short story usually contains a setting, a plot, characters, tone, point of view, and theme. If a child comprehends the interaction among these elements, the child has understood the story on its own terms. Understanding anything one reads presumes, first of all, that it is understood on its own terms. Let us call this level I reading.

What one reads and understands at level I may also be understood analytically. Suppose the short story (Poe's "The Telltale Heart," for example) deals with fear. Imagine further that students have applied skills in order to read other stories, poems, and novels related to the theme of fear. If this is true, the student may use these prior learnings, both knowledge and skills, in order to analyze what is unique about the short story and what the short story has in common with other types of literature. Let us call this level II reading.

What one reads and understands at level I and II may also be understood personally. Continuing to use the short story related to fear as an example, the student can use words and expressions (both literal and figurative) and contexts presented by an author like Poe to communicate his own fears and reactions - past, present, and future - thus sharing conditions of fear vicariously with others.

This personal meaning requires level I, but, rather obviously, student responses at this level will reflect the degree to which level I and II reading has occurred. Let us call this level III reading.

Given the constructs established in the last three paragraphs, critical reading skills are those skills necessary for students to participate in learning activities related to at least three reading levels. These three levels of reading are:

Level I - Comprehension
Level II - Analysis
Level III - Personalization

Seven skills consistent with this definition are presented and analyzed below.

1. Discriminating skill. When an author writes, he may consciously or unconsciously, utilize information, ideas, or beliefs which are inconsistent.

   Given a reading in which conflicting information, ideas, or beliefs are presented, a student uses a discriminating skill, if he

performs the following activities:

a. points out inconsistencies between two pieces of information, two ideas, two beliefs, two recommendations;

b. points out inconsistencies between beliefs, as stated, and recommendations;

c. points out inconsistencies between data and ideas;

d. points out conflicts between information, ideas, beliefs, or commitments he brings to a reading and those he found in the reading itself;

e. explains why he believes he has found an inconsistency, regardless of its form;

f. evaluates the extent to which the inconsistencies noted influence the worth of what he has read.

2. Defining skill. When an author writes, he may choose to use words and phrases in both connotative and denotative fashions. If the author has exercised this choice, the student must be able to grasp both the connotative and denotative meaning of words and phrases. This skill may be viewed from alternative perspectives.

Given a reading in which a word or phrase is used to convey an author's perception, the student

a. differentiates between the connotative and the denotative meaning of the word or phrase used by the author;

b. identifies and correctly expresses the connotative meaning the author has sought to communicate; and

alternatively, given a word or phrase used connotatively in a reading, the student

c. expresses clearly what the word or phrase means to him personally;

d. expresses clearly what the word or phrase meant to the author; and

e. derives valid statements as to the differences and similarities that exist between his personal meaning and that of the author;

or, from a third perspective, the student can perform both skill sequences.

3. Intentional skill. An author may write in order to inform, to entertain, to persuade, or to confuse his reader. This skill may be viewed from two perspectives. Given a reading in which the author states his

purpose, the student

a. paraphrases the author's purpose in his own words, or

b. assesses the degree to which the author presents ideas and information consistent with his purpose.

Given a reading in which the author's purpose is not provided, the student

a. identifies and states the author's purpose, or

b. cites evidence, factual and organization, to demonstrate that the purpose has been correctly identified.

4. Evaluation skill. When an author writes, he may use allegations and express opinions which are either supported or unsupported. In order to read this type of material effectively, the student must first recognize statements of allegation or opinion.

Given a passage in which the author makes an allegation or expresses an opinion, the student

a. identifies and correctly states the allegation or the opinion of the author;

b. identifies the specific ways in which the author does or does not support the opinion or allegation;

c. recognizes whether or not the supportive data are pertinent to the opinion or allegation;

d. differentiates between fact and opinion or allegation;

e. recognizes the difference between subjective opinions or allegations and objective data;

f. recognizes that objective data, improperly applied, may become subjective data.

5. Stylistic skill. An author may write with a style (formal or informal or intimate, to name three possible levels) which affects the reader more than the information or facts which the author is communicating.

Given a reading in which the author's style may advertently or inadvertently affect the reader, the student

a. identifies the information or facts regardless of the style used by the author;

b. determines the extent to which the various styles do or do not affect him (prejudice him);

c. restates facts or information in his own words;

d. differentiates among formal writing, informal (conversational) writing, and private (intimate) writing;

e. categorizes writing styles according to the author's use of standard and nonstandard dialects, slang, idiomatic expressions, and regionalisms.

6. Contextual skill. When the reader interacts with that which an author has written, several contexts may occur simultaneously. For example, both the context within which an author wishes readers to understand his choice of words or terms and the context within which the reader assigns meaning to words or terms are present.

Given a reading in which a variety of contexts may be used in order to derive meaning, the student

a. recognizes that the meaning of a word or phrase may be determined by its context in a sentence;

b. recognizes that a word or phrase may have a different contextual

meaning to the author than to the reader;

c. recognizes that a sentence in isolation may have a meaning different from a sentence in the context of a paragraph;

d. identifies the author's intended audience and intended purpose from the historical context of when the author actually wrote;

e. differentiates between the author's time and intent context for the writing and his own (the reader's) time and intent context for the reading;

f. states different but feasible interpretations of the writing which results from the contexts of time, author and reader intent, emotional climate, and shifts in word usage or meanings.

7. Analytical skill. An author may choose to use one or more kinds of language in order to convey messages to his readers. He may, for example, elect to write in a literal, straight-forward fashion. He may choose to use figurative language. He may opt to use extended allegorical messages. He may, of course, decide to use some combination of all of the above.

Given a reading (or a series of readings) which includes literal, figurative, and allegorical language, the student

a. recognizes the difference between literal and figurative language;

b. identifies the author's use of analogy, metaphor, simile, hyperbole, satire, irony, and sarcasm;

c. differentiates between what the author says and what the author means;

d. recognizes that figurative language can clarify, describe, or depict an event.

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SECTION II

Classroom Activities

In Section I, seven critical reading skills were identified and defined. The purpose of Section II is to present six classroom activities (value sheets) which teachers may use with or without modification in order to test the proposition that students may increase their understanding of human themes, e.g., courage; become more adept at participating in decision-making groups; and hone their reading skills by reacting to value sheets written in a number of different formats. In order to test the proposition, teachers might employ the following approach:

1. Select a forced choice, affirmative, rank-order, or classification format of a value sheet that you believe is relevant to your instructional goals and one that you believe students will perceive as relevant to their concerns.

2. Help students develop a definition for the word courage.

3. Distribute the value sheet and ask students to study the social situation carefully.

4. Lead a discussion designed to ascertain that students have comprehended the story in which the social situation is presented.

5. Review the definition of courage and ask students to identify elements of the story that are germane to this definition.

6. Ask students to complete the individual reaction guide, stressing that they are to do so independently.

7. Organize students in small groups of four or five and stress that members of the group are to seek consensus.

8. As students interact, monitor their behavior to determine the extent to which students are demonstrating level I, level II, and level III reading.

9. Encourage groups to share their conclusions with one another.

10. Reconsider the original definition for the word courage and, if necessary, modify the definition.

THE LANGUAGE IS X RATED
(Standard Format)

Social context. Recently four students were heard discussing contemporary movies. Part of what they said is reprinted below:

JEFF: "I think the ratings are all right just the way they are. There is one change I would make. Some of the pictures are rated PG or even R just because of the language. Most of us have already heard those words before we're in the sixth grade . . . "

TERRI: "All sex isn't dirty. My mom and dad would not have had me. Besides, how could people call babies, 'beautiful' if they were really dirty? What I don't understand is why my dad can say those words and I can't. That's why he won't let me see anything but G movies. But when he hits his finger with the hammer, the language is X-rated . . ."

NANCY: "Those movie ratings really get mixed up between PG and R. I've seen PG movies that have dirtier language than R movies. I go to both because I look old enough to be sixteen, and I go with my brother and his friends because my parents are gone a lot. Maybe the people who run those movies should be more strict about checking the ages of those going to the movies . . ."

ART: "Even if we've heard those words, it doesn't make it right. All of those dirty words should not be in movies at all. Or, at least, every movie with dirty words should be rated X right along with those dirty sex movies. All sex is dirty, too. If I had my way, the word "ratings" would also be a dirty word . . ."

Discussion Starters

1. What are the meanings of G, PG, R, and X in movie ratings?

2. Two students talk only about the language in movies; which two?

3. Two students talk about more than the language in movies. Name them.

4. Three students use the word "dirty" or a form of that word. Name them.

5. What is the denotation of the word "dirty"?

6. What is the connotation of the word "dirty"?

7. The students use other words more for their connotation than for their denotation. Identify one.

8. One student adds what may be a new connotation to the word "rating." Do you agree with his connotation?

9. Suppose an adult may choose to go to an R movie or to stay home alone. Which takes more courage?

10. When Art makes his statement, he calls "a spade a spade." Does it take courage to make this statement?

11. Nancy suggests that the authorities have a reason for telling her not to go to particular movies. What reason does she suggest?

12. Suppose you had to select one of the four positions. Which would you prefer?

13. Imagine that Nancy appears old enough to attend an R-rated movie. Should she take advantage of her appearance?

14. Let's say standards for adults and children were the same. If this were true, how might our society be changed?

FIVE ACRES AND THE OLD SCHOOL
(Standard Format)

In certain rural communities, the school tends to be the social center of the district. Several years ago the town of Wheat Beard lost its school because of consolidation. Actually, it didn't lose its school, it lost its school population because the students were bused to a nearby town about nine miles away. And it was slightly false to call Wheat Beard a town, for that matter. It was near a railroad but the train was tri-weekly. That is, the train went west one week and tried to come back east the next week. There were only five families living in the town which was unincorporated. The general store had closed ten years ago, the post office five years ago. Then when the school children in grades K-8 (Kindergarten through eighth grade) were assigned elsewhere, the town sort of folded its tents and stole away into the night. There were two gas stations on the nearby U.S. highway. There remained, however, one school building and five surrounding acres. The school building was of cinder block with two rooms upstairs and a full basement. It did have a forced-air furnace, running water, and electricity. The restrooms were the old-fashioned outdoor kind with the male and female buildings carefully segregated by space--at least fifty yards of it. The building and its acreage had reverted back to the township and the township board had a problem: everybody had ideas about what to do, but all the ideas were different.

Finally, the township board called a public meeting to make a decision. With the exception of old Mr. Hotchkiss who was too feeble, Mrs. Blaine

who delivered twins last night, and Jim Henry who left for the Army two days ago, everyone else in the township was there from registered voters down to squalling babies (Mrs. Blaine had to be placed under sedation or she would have been there, too, with a baby in each arm!). After a great deal of shouting, the board determined that there appeared to be four main points of view. And after two threatened divorces, one threatened teenage runaway, and one fist fight, each group chose a spokesman to present its point of view.

For more than two hours, neighbor fought neighbor. Then Mr. Forsyth arose and began to speak . . . .

"Well, my pappy used ter say that honest folk kin have honest disagreements and we sure gottem here tonight. Now I've known most a you folks fer years and I think I'm honest in callin' you all my good frins. We us all been thru the good times and the bad times and durin' those bad times we us all hepped each other. Now I got here a story to tell. It's a "parabell" just like in the Good Book. Seems the creator made a mistake - now you all know that God ain't gonna make mistakes soes this happened just pretend. Anyways it seems the birds didn't know how to make nests when they started out soes they all hadda be called back in fer a few lessons in how ter build nests. Now y'all kin imagine the racket those birds made. Those magpies, those crows, those hawks, and even the little tweeters was tweetin' up a storm. Now I wouldn't say directly it sounded like our meetin' tonight but it was close. I ain't heerd any blue jay here tonight but they was at thet meetin'. Soes the nest master begin his lesson by

sayin', "Furst of all you take sticks." Now at this point the crows and magpies thought thet was all yuh needed soes they flied away and ter this day they only use sticks ter make nests. Well, ter make a long story short, only one bird had the patience ter wait and listen ter it all - that there was tne Baltimore Oral. You know I has seen their nests an they is masterpieces of buildin'. They take time ter find just the right mix of materials. Now this is the way I see it. Let's wait for now, let's listen and talk an see what storms the future brings. Let those 4-H' rs go right on meetin' heer fer utility expense only--as long's they clean up after they meet. Let those church folks go right on meetin' heer for $5.00 a Sunday and $2.50 a week on Wednesdays ceptin' in the six months when it's gonna cost em only $4.00 period, 'cause no heat's needed. The roads don't need to be a problem nohow ifn we act as neighbors and work on em together. We kin meet here fer elections and maybe even have a harvest festival to give thanks fer our bounteous blessin's. So I make a motion we vote not ter change anythin' fer five years - then we kin meet an see if weuns want ter change ar minds. But I fer sure don't wanna go off half-cocked an then find out I built myself, or you all, a nest of troubles."

FIVE ACRES AND THE OLD SCHOOL

Discussion Starters

1. The town of Wheat Beard "lost" its school. What did the town lose?

2. Suppose you owned property in Wheat Beard. Is your property increasing in value?

3. Look at your response to question 2. Cite evidence from the story that your response is correct.

4. The township board has a "problem." How is the word problem used in the story?

5. "Neighbors fought neighbor." What is the meaning of "fought" in this situation?

6. Given Mr. Forsyth's speech, describe what the neighbors fought for.

7. Mr. Forsyth uses a technique to calm the emotions of his neighbors. What technique does he use?

8. Mr. Forsyth suggests that his story is a "parabell." Is it?

9. Mr. Forsyth shows courage by speaking. How?

10. Mr. Forsyth shows courage by asking his neighbors to laugh at themselves. How?

11. Mr. Forsyth risks his future by making a recommendation. How?

12. Will Mr. Forsyth's dialect influence his ability to persuade his neighbors?

13. Should the neighbors accept his recommendation?

14. Look at your responses to question 13. Justify your answer.

IT TAKES COURAGE
(Forced-choice Format)

Joe Keenan was in a most uncomfortable position. He was one member of a committee composed of six citizens of his community who were charged with selecting the most courageous act by a teenager that year. Each of the five teenagers who were nominated was chosen by each of the other five committee members. As chairman of the group Joe's vote would break the tie. The award consists of a medal presented by the mayor, several TV appearances, and a four-year college scholarship amounting to almost $3,000 a year. Here are the nominees:

Jennifer Stonewright, fourteen years old, was bicycling on her new bicycle with one of her friends when she noticed smoke pouring from a house on the corner of the block. While Jennifer's friend rushed to another nearby house to call the fire department, Jennifer pedaled to the burning house. As she approached the house, the window in the front burst from the heat. It was then that Jennifer heard a child screaming. Jennifer raced to the back of the house, opened a back door, and managed to find the screaming child in a back bedroom. In that same moment, she also saw a baby in a crib. She scooped the baby into her arms, grabbed the older child by the hand, and led them both to safety. Jennifer had severe burns on one shoulder which she received from stumbling against a burning doorway and severe burns on one hand from turning a red hot door knob. It is possible that Jennifer may lose the use of her hand. Only after extensive surgery and rehabilitation

for the next two years, will she and her doctors know for sure.

During the melee, someone stole her new bicycle.

School activities: Girls' track, art exhibits
Grade average: A-
Future plans: college - teacher education
Parents combined income: $12,000 per annum

Jeffery Turner, fifteen years old, had ridden in a car with his mother to a shopping center. As he got out of the car, he saw a driverless van rolling backwards toward two women who had stopped to visit in the parking lot. Their backs were turned to the van and a small child was in one of the grocery carts. Jeff raced toward the women, knocked the women and the cart with the child out of the way. One of Jeff's legs was crushed between the van and the cart. The doctors saved the leg, but the knee was so badly crushed that the leg will always be stiff and unbending.

School activities: football, baseball
Grade average: B+
Future plans: college - business administration
Parents combined income: $16,000 per annum

Harry Gibson, seventeen years old, was driving home with one of his friends after going to a drive-in movie when he saw one man being beaten by

by two other men in a deserted parking lot. Harry drove into the lot and frightened the two men away by driving at them with his car. One of the men had a gun which he fired at Harry's car, breaking the windshield, ruining the radiator, and flattening one tire. The man Harry saved died the next day in the hospital from internal injuries. The two other men have not been apprehended at this time.

School activities: football, baseball, wrestling
Grade average: C
Future plans: auto mechanic, TV repairman
Parents combined income: $8,500 per annum

Jim Jones, sixteen years old, was on a float trip on a large river in a neighboring county. The raft he was on with five other young men about his age was struck by a barge around midnight. Jim managed to throw life preservers to two of his friends and pulled another companion who was unconscious to safety. The other two young men drowned.

School activities: swimming team, football, National Honor Society
Grade average: A
Future plans: college (medicine, law, architecture)
Parents combined income: $10,000 per annum

Geraldine Ensminger, seventeen years old, was riding on a school bus after school when the bus had

a head-on collision with a gasoline truck which immediately burst into flame. Almost all of the students panicked but Geraldine opened the emergency door and began shoving other students out. Then she went to the front of the bus and made four trips back to the emergency door dragging students who were either unconscious or too injured to escape. As she made her fourth trip, the truck exploded throwing burning gasoline the length of the bus. The student Geraldine was dragging at the moment of the explosion burned to death in the doorway, but Geraldine hurled herself out the door and lived. She had several third degree burns and will need extensive surgery on her feet and plastic surgery on her face. Ten students and the bus driver were either killed immediately or burned to death. One other student died in the hospital, but Geraldine was credited with saving herself and eighteen others.

School activities: none
Grade average: D+
Future plans: not sure, waitress or supermarket checker
Parents combined income: $6,500 per annum

Individual Decision Sheet

Select the most courageous act and mark your choice with an X.

_____ Jennifer Stonewright's act

_____ Jeffrey Turner's act

_____ Harry Gibson's act

_____ Jim Jones' act

_____ Geraldine Ensminger's act

When you meet with other members of your committee, you will need to explain how you reached your decision. What explanation will you offer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Group Decision Sheet

As a committee, select the most courageous act. Mark your choice, as a group, with an X.

_____ Jennifer Stonewright's act

_____ Jeffrey Turner's act

_____ Harry Gibson's act

_____ Jim Jones' act

_____ Geraldine Ensminger's act

When you announce your decision, those who recommended losers will want to know the basis on which you made your decision. What justification will your group provide?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Discussion Starters

1. Did the sex of the teenagers make a difference in this situation?

2. Two of the heroes or heroines were in their situation while three of them chose to enter the situation. Did this difference enter into your decision?

3. What was the single criterion for the award?

4. How do you use the term courage?

5. If there were a single criterion, did you allow other information to sway your decision?

6. Should the number of people saved be considered in your decision?

JENNIFER'S MESSAGE
(Affirmative Format)

Ralph Morgan was the principal of a high school on the fringes of a large midwestern city. One day, after having been at school district meetings until almost 4:00 p.m., he arrived at his school and was confronted with a problem by one of his vice-principals, Mr. Harcourt. It seems that Jennifer, who was a student in an eleventh grade creative writing class, had submitted a short story which included students taking drugs to the point of an overdose, and some typical swear words. The vice-principal was especially angry about the swear words and wanted Jennifer to be punished to the extent that she be expelled from school. Mr. Morgan, however, tried not to make any hasty decisions with problems of this sort and made arrangements to have the key school personnel involved in this situation meet in his office before school in the morning.

The next morning the group gathered and this was the way Jennifer's problem came about:

> The student teacher, Mary Farmer, had gathered the short stories a week ago and without reading them had given them to Helen Greenford who was a grader hired by the school system to make certain corrections which the English Department faculty had agreed that short story papers needed. When Mrs. Greenford had read Jennifer's paper, she became upset at Jennifer's language and determined that she would inform the regular teacher, Robert Johnston, immediately. But on

her way into the high school, she saw Mr. Harcourt, the vice-principal, and showed him the red circles she had made around the offensive words. Mr. Harcourt saw the circled words, agreed that Jennifer was in trouble and promised to take up the matter with Mr. Morgan as soon as possible. Then Mrs. Greenford took all of the papers to Mr. Johnston, calling special attention to Jennifer's paper and explaining what she had said to Mr. Harcourt. Mr. Johnston also looked at the circled words and agreed that Jennifer had some explaining to do. He then gave the papers to Mary Farmer, the student teacher, mentioning that Jennifer's paper was really a problem and Mary should finish grading all but Jennifer's paper which would receive a grade, probably an F, only after the principal made a decision about Jennifer's suspension from school.

At this point, the discussion came to a halt because Mary, the student teacher, confessed that she had taken all of the papers home after school the day before and had left them there (forty miles away) because she hadn't finished grading them.

Realizing that a decision could not be made until he had Jennifer's short story, Mr. Morgan asked the group for their recommendations, and everyone agreed to meet again before school the next day to talk further.

The recommendations given to Mr. Morgan were as follows:

1. Mr. Harcourt, the vice-principal: Immediate suspension for two weeks and because it was the last two weeks of the semester, Jennifer would receive either lower grades or failing grades for all of her courses because the school policy was that work could not be made-up for the time a student is suspended.

2. Ms. Greenford, the grader: Immediate suspension for at least a week with readmission possible only if Jennifer's parents came with her and promised that they would see to it that Jennifer did not submit any more papers which deal with drugs or which include swear words.

3. Mr. Johnston, the regular classroom teacher: Suspend Jennifer from his class only for a week, and upon readmission, Jennifer must explain to the class why she was suspended and why none of them should write stories about drugs or with swear words. She would also receive an F on her paper and would receive a semester grade at least one grade below her average.

4. Ms. Farmer, the student teacher: Because the swear words seemed to fit in the story and because the story was one of the best in the class, Jennifer would receive a grade of B or C on her paper, and Ms. Farmer would lead a class discussion about why swear

words were unacceptable in high school creative writing classes.

Mr. Morgan listened carefully to the recommendations. He knew that he had at least twenty-four hours before he had to make a decision, and he also knew that he needed to read the story before making a final decision.

The next morning Ms. Farmer was the first to arrive, but before she gave Jennifer's short story to Mr. Morgan, she offered this added evidence: "Mr. Morgan, last night I showed Jennifer's story to my university supervisor, Mr. Huffman, and explained the problem. After Mr. Huffman read the story, he said, 'But the problem isn't the drugs and the swearing; the problem is that this story is a cry for help. I think that Jennifer either is contemplating suicide or has tried committing suicide in the past two weeks.' "

Mr. Morgan cancelled the meeting, and by the end of second period, one of the guidance counselors confirmed that Jennifer had tried suicide last week. All morning, Mr. Morgan thought about the problem. Then he made the best possible decision. He decided to . . .

Turn to the Individual Decision Sheet and record <u>your</u> <u>best</u> response.

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Individual Decision Sheet

As Mr. Morgan, you must decide what is best. Although you may consider the advice of others, you are free to invent the best solution you can. In order to share this solution with others, complete the two statements that follow:

My decision is to _____

_____

_____

_____

I believe this is the best decision because _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Group Decision Sheet

As members of a group, you are to invent the best solution you can. First, use this space to list all the solutions suggested by members of your group.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Second, as a group, identify what solution you believe is best. You may select one of the solutions listed above, combine and modify solutions, or invent a solution that no one has previously presented. We believe the best solution is to _____
_____
_____
_____

We believe our solution is best because _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

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Discussion Starters

What did Mr. Morgan decide to do?

1. Some persons made their recommendations without reading all of Jennifer's short story. Who were they?

2. Some persons made their recommendations after reading the entire short story. Who were they?

3. If you, as Mr. Morgan, had made your decision after the first meeting, what would have happened?

4. Mr. Huffman guessed that Jennifer's short story was a "cry for help." What clues led him to this conclusion?

5. The least official person at the first meeting was Ms. Farmer, the student teacher, yet she presented the most lenient recommendation. What could have been her reasoning?

6. Two cliches are "look before you leap" and "he who hesitates is lost." Which person fits the first saying best? The second saying?

7. Look at the two sayings again. In everyday life which saying requires the most courage to follow?

8. Who are the most courageous persons in the group? The least courageous?

9. Which persons appeared to read the swear words out of context? In context?

10. Should an individual ever, for any reason, commit suicide?

11. Suppose you rejected the friendship of a classmate who later committed suicide. If this happened, what would your feelings be?

12. The student teacher is probably closer to Jennifer in age than the other persons. A teacher may seek to represent the adult world or to relate to the world of the youth he/she teaches. Which tendency is favorable?

BELATED RECOGNITION - PAST ACHIEVEMENT (Rank Order Format)

In her will, an extremely wealthy widow, Dora McCauley, left $1,000,000 for the establishment of a scholarship fund for needy young women. Ms. McCauley did not want her name associated with the fund; however, before her death she asked a group of old friends and business associates to select a name for her fund. (You were among those selected,) She also provided some guidelines for the selection. These guidelines were as follows:

A. The fund must be named for a woman.

B. The woman's name may reflect any nationality. So as to prevent bias on the committee's part, the women's names are not to be revealed until after the selection.

C. The woman selected must have displayed unusual courage.

D. The woman must have carried out these acts of courage between the years 1850 and 1950.

E. Becuase of Ms. McCauley's contention that many women have not been appropriately recognized for their actions, the woman selected is not to be one of those who became commonly known during her own lifetime or who is typically mentioned

in history books. Rather, this selection should be an occasion for new, though belated, recognition of a courageous woman.

After several months of research by a separate committee, five stories of courageous women were presented to the group. These women had carried out their acts of courage during the stipulated time period: 1850-1950 - (Woman A, 1941-1945; Woman B, 1900-1940; Woman C, 1910-1950; Woman D, 1880-1910; Woman E, 1895-1930). Each of the committee members was to rate each woman from most courageous (1) to least courageous (5). From this listing the woman with the lowest number would be the one whose name would appear on the scholarship fund.

As a member of this committee how would you rate the five women?

WOMAN A

During World War II, this woman served with one of the resistance groups who fought against Nazi Germany. She guided at least ten United States and British pilots to the coast where they were ferried to safety. After an informer revealed her identity, the Gestapo surrounded her house and set it on fire. She was able to escape although her husband was executed because of her activities. During the Normandy landings she participated in several ambushes as her group impeded the German troop movements toward the coast. During one of these small battles (her last one), she lost a hand but was

saved when the advancing Canadian troops overran the area where she was hiding and gave her needed medical attention. She was a soldier in every sense of the word.

WOMAN B

When she was twelve, her mother died. She had five brothers, and because her father was unskilled and a drunkard, three of the brothers were placed in an orphanage. After two or three years the father wandered off, but by working as a hired girl for two dollars a week, she saved enough money in five years to become the guardian of her brothers, releasing them from the orphanage. After the brothers were old enough to leave home, she used her apartment as a sort of flophouse for people who were worse off than she was. She bought clothes on the installment plan and in one instance gave another woman her own coat before it was paid for. One of her brothers wanted to become an artist, and despite her neighbors' complaining about her taking care of someone who didn't do anything worthwhile, she supported him until he became a success in his field.

She convinced another of her brothers that one of his friends did not want to work at anything but would take from others. This brother avoided his so-called friend who was then killed in a robbery attempt within a week.

When her successful, artist brother offered to give her money for her fondest wish, she chose to

take a trip to visit the grave of one brother who had been killed and buried several thousand miles away. She died before she was fifty years old, never having married and never having lived much above the poverty line. Almost all of her life she owned nothing that she wasn't willing to give away.

WOMAN C

This woman lived in a geographical area which changed hands often as various countries and nationalities fought over its control. During one of these times, a German official made her stop feeding the starving civilians with her own resources, but then a Turkish leader asked her to use his country's facilities. She entered chaos with people desperately fighting for food, calmed the mob, and managed to provide them all with enough food to keep them alive.

Another time Britain and Turkey were warring when she saw hundreds of British and Turkish wounded lying along a major road with no one taking care of them. She received permission to treat them by indicating that pain knew no nationality. Although she was not a medical doctor, she even amputated a man's legs because there was no one else available to undertake the operation.

Between wars she was instrumental in caring for thousands of babies who were abandoned or whose parents could not care for them. Out of this work came a hospital that she started herself. During a later conflict she evacuated these children to the countryside while she herself remained in a

kind of no man's land to again treat the wounded regardless of the side they fought for. After this war many of the soldiers returned as civilians to have her help the entire family. She was, indeed, a person who could rise above differences that cause war.

WOMAN D

She tried becoming an artist and she failed. She tried becoming a writer and she failed. Her marriage failed after her child died and her husband began drinking to excess. Looking for a sense of direction in her life, she became conscious of one particular group of people around her who desperately needed help. She lived in a time when people thought that cancer could be passed from one person to another like a common cold. As a result, these people were shunned like the lepers of Biblical times. In fact, it was not unusual for a family to force one of its own members out onto the street to fend for himself. In spite of the pressures from her friends and from society, she used the last of her savings to establish a home for these cancer-ridden outcasts, and although there were times over the years when she fell behind in paying the mortgage, her home became an established hospital. She helped thousands of people, most of whom died in horrible agony. To her, however, there was no such thing as a hopeless case.

WOMAN E

Being a widow with six children whom she had left behind in California temporarily (or, at least she hoped temporarily), she arrived in an Alaskan Gold Rush boom town. Her first job was cooking in a tent for twenty to thirty men three times a day. Her pay was not enough to send for her children, but she had the ability to ascertain what was needed for the future. Her first guess on the future was that the prospectors wanted bakery goods so she took abandoned pieces of roofing tin, pounded them into pans, and by working far into the night, every night, baked pies and cakes to sell to the men who were going inland to look for gold. With these profits she sent for her children. Her next guess on the future involved her sending for horses which she used to haul supplies further inland. Her typical daily round trip took at least fourteen hours, putting her on the trail by 4:00 a.m. each day. On one of these trips she saw a man beating a mule which had a broken leg. After shooting the mule, she threatened to kill the man, too. He didn't argue but went on his way.

After the gold fever lessened and improved transportation cut down her hauling business, she looked to the future again, purchased a large building, and turned it into a combination hotel and museum. All during this time she not only reared her children who went on to successful endeavors on their own, but she also grubstaked several hundred other people who were down on their luck.

Decision Sheet

Rank the five women from the most courageous to the least courageous. When each of you has done this individually, I will ask you to share your rankings with those made by others.

_____ Woman A

_____ Woman B

_____ Woman C

_____ Woman D

_____ Woman E

The person I ranked first should be ranked first because _____

_____

_____

_____

The woman I ranked last should be ranked last because _____

_____

_____

_____

Discussion Starters

1. As a member of the committee what are you to decide?

2. Each of the women apparently acted courageously on several occasions, but what single act by each woman is the most memorable to you?

3. Which woman did something which you, also, feel capable of doing? Which do you feel incapable of doing?

4. Could you have guessed the approximate times when these women lived without having read that information?

5. Is there a difference between saving lives and taking lives so that others may live?

6. From the information given about each of the women, which ones had children? Could Woman B be classified as a mother even though she was a sister to her brothers?

7. One woman worked with the hopelessly ill while another worked with babies. Should the potential life of persons make a difference in whether or not we help them?

8. Which woman lived in the most danger? the least danger?

9. Would it make a difference to you if you knew that one of these women was Irish? Polish?

Jewish? French? Black? Anglo-Saxon? Arab?

10. Would it make a difference to you if you knew that one of these women was a Protestant who converted to Catholicism? Was a nun? Was a Mohammedan? Did not belong to a religious group?

11. Which woman was probably the happiest? the saddest?

Group Decision Sheet

As members of a group, try to reach agreement as to the correct ranking for each of the five women. Seek consensus; do not vote.

_____ Woman A

_____ Woman B

_____ Woman C

_____ Woman D

_____ Woman E

We believe the person we ranked first should be ranked first because _____

_____

_____

_____

We believe the person we ranked last should be ranked last because _____

_____

_____

_____

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MAY YOUR LIFE BE LONG AND HEALTHY
(Classification Format)

In the year 2,025 the world was enveloped in an atomic war. Most of the world would be unfit for habitation for thousands of years, and most of the people of the world were already dead. There was one group of people who were still alive. This group of researchers had been carrying on experiments deep in a salt mine in the midwestern United States. There had been sufficient warning for the researchers to have their families join them. Some of the local people had also sensed that the mines would be a safe place, at least for a time. As a result the people in the mine represented a cross section of a very small town of 200 people, with the exception of an unusual number of scientists.

The sensing devices above ground indicated that the area immediately above them would be habitable in about 500 years. This area of about 900 square miles (roughly 30 miles by 30 miles) included a large reservoir, several springs, streams, and lakes. The land was grassland and farmland with a few wooded areas of scrub oak, ash, and cottonwood trees. The temperatures in the summer ranged from 80°- 105°F. for highs, and 60°-85°F. for lows. The winter temperatures ranged from 25°below zero F. to 65°F., but an average winter day had a high of 38°F. and a low of 17°F.

The people in the mine, however, were faced with a problem because they did not have enough food for their descendents to live 500 years. Even if only

one family were chosen, the food could not last for the necessary 12-25 generations.

Fortunately, the researchers had been working on the development of a series of atomic powered devices which could provide a form of deep sleep or suspended animation which would allow a living creature to survive for at least 600 years. That is, the living creature would awaken from an almost death-like existence.

All of these ideas were possible now but were unproven. It would be a big gamble, but most of the people wanted to try it. But this decision was the easy part, for if the experiment failed, there would be no pain involved. Each person would simply not wake up after being put to sleep electronically. The problem was how would they survive if the sleeping devices were successful? What would they eat? The information from above ground indicated that a few reptiles might survive and that some rodents in urban areas might adapt enough to survive. Also, quite a few insects such as flies and cockroaches would probably continue to exist. Mutant varieties of trees, plants, and grasses might also be available.

After taking an inventory of the experimental animals and checking another part of the mine which was used for the storage of fruits, vegetables, and grains, the group realized that they could take certain key food supplies with them. There was room for four kinds of living creatures or four kinds of crops or a combination of four crops and animals. Because of the rodent problem they knew that the grain or vegetables or fruit, for example, had to be placed in the devices along with the people.

Faced with the crucial question of the survival of the species, homosapiens, the first decision was unanimous: The cats and dogs had to be destroyed. Then they began the process of deciding which four future foods would they seal in with them in hopes that they could survive upon awakening in the future, 500-600 years from now.

After much discussion, the group agreed that the following items would be most useful:

fruit	green beans
pigs	sheep
wheat	cattle
corn	chickens
cabbage	horses
spinach	soybeans

Now turn to the decision sheets and follow the direction provided.

Individual Decision Sheet

Imagine that you are a member of the surviving group. Rank the following items from the item that will be most valuable to the item that will be least valuable.

____ Fruit

____ Pigs

____ Wheat

____ Corn

____ Cabbage

____ Sheep

____ Green Beans

____ Spinach

____ Cattle

____ Chickens

____ Soybeans

____ Horses

Group Decision Sheet

Members of your group have been selected to make a binding decision for the total group. As a group, you are to select the four most valuable items and explain why these four are the most valuable.

The four most valuable foods are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Our rationale for choosing these four is as follows: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Discussion Starters

1. What are the temperature extremes for winter? for summer?

2. Which two choices would be good sources of cooking oil?

3. Which animals could reproduce the fastest?

4. Which choice is the best source of vitamin C? the next best source?

5. How important would salt be to the survivors?

6. Which choices would provide the most balanced diet?

7. If sheep are important for woolen clothing, then which grain or vegetable would they eat?

8. If horses are important only for transportation and moving heavy objects, then could cattle be trained to do this work?

9. Certain religious groups have dietary restrictions. Should this be considered before selecting pigs and horses, for example?

10. If you could choose only one vegetable to eat the rest of your life, which one would you choose?

SUMMARY

Three important goals of general education are:

1. to hone critical reading skills so that students will gain the skills of acquiring and processing the information demanded for meaningful participation in a free society;

2. to develop and refine valuing skills in order that students will feel competent about and operate efficiently in decision-making groups; and

3. to increase the number of human themes students may employ in order to understand and share their personal experiences with others.

In this monograph, we have provided materials for teachers to test the proposition that the three goals above may be pursued concurrently. We welcome the testing.

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